

INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES: COFFS HARBOUR

Organisation:

Name: Mr Jim Brennan

Telephone:

Date Received: 4/11/2005

Subject:

Summary

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No 4
Legislative Council, Parliament House.
Sydney, 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

The Pacific Highway is a national disgrace.
As the major motor way between Sydney and Brisbane
it is little more than a goat's track in comparison
to the Home & the other motorways of the world.

The road itself is a cause of continual
frustration & annoyance. In coming years the
demands on the Highway will increase enormously
especially in relationship to caravans & trucks.

At present the following problems are
clearly apparent:

1. The lack of dual carriage for the majority
of the journey.
2. The lack of an emergency lane.
3. The constant changes in driving conditions,
especially the decrease in speed limits that
leave drivers confused & frustrated.
4. The fact that through traffic is constantly
having to accommodate to local traffic in the
way of dangerous intersections, and, entering
& leaving lanes.
5. The need for through traffic to get caught
up in traffic lights and pedestrian traffic as it
passes through each country centre & village. Coffs
Harbour with its 12 phs set of lights is as bad as
time lost passing through some hamlet with a
hotel & church.
6. The constant delay for roadwork & more

alarming accidents.

7. The amount of heavy vehicle traffic & the speed they travel at given the condition of the road. These truck drivers are particularly intimidating at night, sitting right on your tail until they can speed past, obviously aware that their numbers are unlikely to be taken. At night the Pacific Highway is a nightmare.

8. The lack of uniformity of entering the highway by local traffic. At Safety Beach locals dash across to a centre lane & then prop. At Safety Beach no such propping lane exists. Similar concerns exist where exit lanes exist soon after 100kph limits start. Local exiting traffic must get into the right hand lane causing inconvenience to through traffic.

On a recent return trip from Sydney I experienced long delays due to two accidents & roadworks. A trip that should have taken 5½ hours took 8 hours, the last 2 in the dark. With trucks right on my tail & others roving towards me I felt like pulling over only to discover that there was less than 1 metre before a drop of half a metre or so.

On October 29th in the Cpf's Advocate Mr Andrew Fraser says: "It is totally

unacceptable local traffic entering the Highway at these dangerous intersections should be meeting heavy vehicles and through traffic travelling at 100km/h." Page 6.

Then on page 9 he states: "the State Government needed to recognise that the Pacific Highway was a workplace for truck drivers & the state of the road was an occupational & safety issue for drivers."

He is right on both points. However, his medium term solution to cut speed limits will only add to drivers frustration and cause drivers to try to make up time elsewhere & thus simply shifting the problems to another location. Motorway traffic & local traffic don't mix.

In this the 21st Australians deserve & require road infrastructure that will see them into the 22nd. Get real - we all know the problem; we can all see the solution: **TAKE ACTION NOW!**

Yours sincerely
Jim Brennan.